

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 and 34-45 are pending in the application, and the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims as amended.

Claims 1-32, 34-36 and 45 were rejected under 35 USC 101 as not having a “useful, concrete and tangible result.” Pursuant to the suggestion of the Examiner, claims have been amended to include “outputting, displaying, storing or otherwise conveying the result of the method steps.”

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the useful result is the outputting of the pattern that represents a defect to carry out a quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this useful result can be found, for example, at paragraphs [0002] and [0028] of the specification.

Claim 2 has also been clarified to provide an improved quality inspection of the wafer. Support for the step and the benefits of determining a scanning height for the sensor can be found at paragraphs [0010] – [0012] of the specification.

Claim 5 has also been clarified to provide the feature of determining a reference point for optimizing the quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0083] – [0086] of the specification.

Claim 9 has also been clarified to provide the feature of deconvoluting the contact potential difference data for improving the quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0093] and [0094] of the specification.

Claim 14 has also been clarified to provide the feature of removing a time delay from the non-vibrating contact potential difference sensor data for improving the quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0092] and [0094] of the specification.

Claim 32 has also been clarified to provide the feature of outputting the reconstructed data to carry out an improved quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0013], [0091] and [0092] of the specification. In addition, claim 32 has been further clarified by adding a step of “generating signal data from a contact potential

difference sensor characteristic of a surface of a wafer.” Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0009], [0032], FIG. 3 and paragraphs [0069] – [0073].

Claim 36 has also been clarified to provide the feature of outputting the deconvoluted sensor signal to carry out a quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0093] – [0096] and FIGS. 16 and 17. The claims have also been clarified with proper recitation of generating a sensor signal characteristic of a wafer.

Claim 45 has also been clarified to provide the feature of utilizing the pattern that represents the defect to carry out a quality inspection of the wafer. Support for this feature can be found at paragraphs [0002] and [0025].

In view of the Applicants providing clarification of the useful result of the invention, it is believed that all claims 1-32 and 34-45 are now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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